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## A HISTORY OF THE DANES IN AMERICA.

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WITH A MAP—PLATE I.

Of all the nationalities that have come to this country in any considerable number, the Danes are the ones of whom the least is said or known. They have taken but little part in politics, either national, state or local. Their religious organizations and institutions have attracted no attention, and their settlements seem to have been wholly lost sight of, even by the practical politician. It is this peculiar insignificance of the Danes as a factor in the life of this country to which I especially wish to call attention in the following paper. But as the national characteristics, and the ideas and conditions existing in Denmark, are largely responsible for the position of the Danes in America, it is necessary for an understanding of the subject to begin with a discussion of the Danes in Denmark.

The Danes of to-day, in Denmark, though the direct descendants of the redoubtable vikings, possess but few of their stern, war-like characteristics. In fact, it is only through their fondness for the stories recounting the deeds of the ancient gods and heroes that the modern Danes show their mental kinship to the viking.

Seven hundred years of peaceful occupation among the most peaceful of natural surroundings, together with three hundred years of serfdom under which the majority of the people were reduced to the condition of mere beasts of burden, are the main agencies which have made the Danish descendants of the viking a peace-loving, easy-going, good-natured people, with a considerable lack of self-confidence and enterprise. The political events

in Denmark during the present century illustrate most strikingly this non-aggressive spirit of the common people. They have received all their social and political liberties from the powers above them without violence and almost without agitation on their part; and when those liberties have been encroached upon they have made but little resistance. The serfdom of the peasant was removed in 1788 through the benevolent efforts of Count Bernsdorf, then an influential member of the king's cabinet. In the year 1849 the king, Frederick VII., voluntarily relinquished his absolute power and gave his people a very liberal constitution; but in the quarrel which has since arisen between the present reactionary king Christian IX. and his ministry on the one hand, and the representatives of the people on the other, regarding the interpretation of this constitution, the people have made concession after concession, till at present they retain only a semblance of the political liberties given them less than half a century ago.

Another marked peculiarity of the Danish character is a love for the ideal, the emotional, and the romantic. This characteristic shows itself in the literature, in the everyday life of the people, and in many of their social institutions. But it is most strikingly exhibited in the remarkable influence exercised by N. F. S. Grundtvig on the social, political, and religious life of the people. And as his influence has extended to this country, and is a prominent factor in the life of the Danes here, it is necessary to discuss his life and work somewhat in detail.

N. F. S. Grundtvig was born in 1783. He was the son of a minister and was himself educated for the church. He was possessed of a many-sided character, and one full of apparent inconsistencies; but he was pre-eminently a poet and a reformer, possessing the romantic temperament of the one and the courage, enthusiasm, and persistence of the other.

The chief end and ambition of his life was to reform the Danish church, which at the time he entered upon his ministry, 1810, was given over to rationalism of the French pattern, or to dead meaningless formalism. He wished to bring back what he called old-fashioned, living Christianity and pure Lutheranism. At first this was not much more than an implicit belief

in the Bible, coupled with a pietistic philosophy of life. But in the course of time his belief underwent some remarkable changes. He dropped the idea of the Bible being an infallible guide, asserting that a belief in the Apostles' Creed and the words of the Communion service, coupled with a good Christian life, was all that was necessary for membership in the true Christian church. But in his opinion the living of a Christian life meant an active, sympathetic participation in all the affairs of life. He wished to substitute feeling and activity for doctrinal discussions and formalism, and individual judgment for blind acceptance of a creed. Being intensely patriotic, his love of country became thoroughly identified with his religion. It is impossible, he said, to love God and not love one's fatherland and mother-tongue. He advanced the idea that each nation had a special mission to perform in the world, and had been especially appointed and trained by God to perform that mission. From the traditions and history of the Danes, he inferred that to them was given the mission of reuniting all the Christian churches, to re-establish "peace on earth and good will toward men," the highest and most sacred mission of all. But in order to fulfill their mission, they must be true to their language and traditions; and if they failed in this, God would punish them as he did the Israelites of old when they strayed from the path he had marked out for them.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Grundtvig may be quoted on this subject so as to prove him to be either a broad-minded, liberal patriot and statesman, or a religious enthusiast who wishes to make the nation a mere tool in the hands of God, or a sentimental, bigoted nation-worshipper. His speeches in the constitutional assembly of 1849 on the subjects of suffrage, freedom of religion, title and rank, freedom of speech, police power of the state, provisions for the poor, and compulsory education are instances of the first kind. (See H. Brun's *Life of Grundtvig*, Vol. 1, pp. 330-342.)

"Heligtrekongers-Lyset," written in 1813, when the allied troops threatened an attack on Denmark, shows him as the religious enthusiast. His "Trøste-Brev til Danmark" written after the war of 1864, his speech at the meeting of his friends in 1865, (see pp. 7-13 of proceedings of this meeting), and also his sermon, "Fredsfyrsten og Morderen," show him the bigot and sentimental. His friends have made the mistake of accepting every word from him as a self-evident truth, while his enemies are making the still greater mistake of looking at and criticising his weaker and senti-

He himself was indefatigable in his efforts to arouse and strengthen the patriotic sentiment of his countrymen. He translated into plain modern Danish many of the old Scandinavian myths, stories and ballads, and celebrated both in poetry and prose the deeds and prowess of the old gods and heroes. He addressed himself to the common people, especially to the peasants, for he believed that the upper classes had been so influenced and warped by foreign, especially German, culture and ideas that they had almost lost their Danish character. It was not, however, till 1848-49 that he began to exert any decided influence on the common people. The war carried on at that time against the rebel duchies, Schleswig and Holstein, and the granting of the constitution, thoroughly aroused the patriotic spirit of the Danes. Grundtvig and his picturesque religion with its poetry, myth, saga, and patriotism, which he still claimed was old-fashioned Lutheranism, pure and simple, gained many adherents. A spirit of religious enthusiasm was aroused. Laymen began to preach and exhort, something hitherto unheard-of. Home missionary societies were organized, and religious meetings of the revival type were the order of the day. But the most important feature of this agitation was the establishment of so-called peasant high schools. From the very beginning of his career Grundtvig had been strongly opposed to the schools of his day, with their "learning by rote of dead and useless facts." He advocated the establishment of schools, the chief functions of which should be to inculcate religious and patriotic sentiment and give instruction in the practical affairs of life. He first tried to interest the government in his ideal. Failing in this, his friends raised sufficient money to enable him to carry out his plan independently, and in 1856 the first peasant high school was established in Denmark proper. Since then the number of these schools has steadily increased till at the present time they number about seventy, with an annual attendance of between three and four thousand students. This means a

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mental utterances,—things which he has said or written under great emotional pressure. His work, "Kirke-Spejl," a series of church historical lectures given in 1863, undoubtedly gives the fairest representation of his views on the subject of nationality and religion.

great deal in a country with an area only one-fourth that of the state of Wisconsin, and a population of only two millions.<sup>1</sup>

These schools have all been built by private enterprise or public subscription, and they are patronized almost exclusively by the rural population. Religion, history, literature, and singing are the main subjects of instruction, and the main aim is to develop the patriotic and religious spirit in the direction indicated by Grundtvig. Their tendency is to lay too much stress on the ideal and too little on the real, to cultivate the emotions rather than intellect. Nevertheless the effect of these schools, as indeed of the whole Grundtvigian agitation, has been to make the common people more patriotic, more appreciative of the higher sentiments, and less submissive to authority of any kind. Pastoral authority has especially suffered. Indeed it has almost entirely disappeared; a fact which partly explains the very

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<sup>1</sup>The methods adopted by the high schools are based on the supposition of an ideal instructor dealing with ideal pupils. Nearly all the instruction is given in the form of lectures, or by personal talks with the pupils. This is done on the theory that the living word of the teacher is much more impressive than the dead letter of any book. No qualifications for entering are required: no set lessons are given, no definite amount of work is assigned, and there are no class recitations. The schools recognize no such things as examination, promotion or graduation. No other stimulus is relied upon than the personality of the teacher and the student's love for the work in hand. As might be expected, this method is not conducive to any very intense intellectual activity. In fact, there is such an apparent lack of effort and concentration on the part of the students in these schools that an American schoolmaster, even if he were a Herbartian, would be likely to pronounce the whole procedure a farce. The following is a sample of the work as observed by the writer at the Rodkilde high school on the island of Moen, 1892: A class of about fifty were comfortably seated in a large, pleasant room, each one engaged in some work of knitting or crocheting. They were rattling needles and silently passing judgments upon their work and that of their neighbors; while the teacher was sitting at his desk, delivering a lecture upon the geography of Denmark. In arithmetic these same young ladies were all working at their seats on slates, each one from some different part of the text book. If they succeeded in working the problem in hand to their own satisfaction, they took hold of the next; if unable to work it they went to the teachers, who were sitting at desks at one end of the room. The teacher showed them how to solve the problem and sent them to their seats to work as before.

slight influence which the Danish ministers in this country have on their countrymen. In fact, the whole beautiful religious machinery devised by the state has been put out of gear by this agitation; and the established Lutheran church, or the church of the people, as it is called, though it claims the allegiance of more than ninety-nine per cent. of the Danes, after all is only a name which three different factions are each trying to appropriate to itself. These are the old-fashioned strict doctrinarians, the Grundtvigians, and the Inner Mission society. The first of these three want things to go on in the old, formal way, with religion confined within the church walls and consisting mostly of a strict interpretation of dry theological points by the regularly ordained minister. The Grundtvigians and the Inner Mission people agree in making religion a part of everyday life and every man's concern. But the Grundtvigians are thorough-going optimists. They call themselves the happy Christians, take part in all the pleasures and activities of life with the greatest zest, and concern themselves but little about doctrinal points. The Inner Mission people are thorough-going pietists; they call themselves the holy ones, and profess to despise all worldly pleasures. They insist on absolute belief of total depravity, and literal belief in the Bible.<sup>1</sup> And in spite

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<sup>1</sup>The Inner Mission society was established in 1854. It was the out-growth of the Grundtvigian agitation, and the early leaders, who were all laymen, were adherents of Grundtvig's, but with pietistic tendencies. In 1861 Vilhelm Beck, a minister of the established church, was elected president of the society, which, at that time, had but little influence and no regular working force. But under his leadership it has become the most powerful agency in the country for stimulating and maintaining religious interest. According to the report of the society for 1895 it owned eighty-seven mission-houses, insured at \$101,509. Its income for the year was \$27,395, nearly all gifts. It employed ninety-six regular missionaries, and counted as its supporters about two hundred of the ministers of the established church and a large number of the teachers of the public schools; 16,000 public religious meetings had been held during the year. It must be remembered that all this is carried on aside from the regular work of the established church, to which all the Inner Mission people profess to belong. The missionaries are working somewhat according to old apostolic methods. They are sent out two by two, and go from house to house exhorting, preaching, and selling religious tracts. When a community has

of the fact that the two factions have a common origin, they are irreconcilably opposed to each other; and the antagonism between them is becoming more marked every year, furnishing any amount of material for quarrels within church circles, both in Denmark and among the Danes in this country. Indeed, the ideas held by the Grundtvigians and Inner Mission society have had a decisive influence on the destiny of the Danes in America as a separate nationality.<sup>1</sup> No other questions, save those of an industrial nature, can lay any such claim to the attention of the Danish public as do these. Politically the Danes are all at sea. There is no strong party with any definite policy, and the sentiment in favor of larger political liberty has become dormant among the common people through the long losing struggle they have carried on against the government. The sentiment of patriotism and national pride too is waning, except among the Grundtvigians, and a feeling of national helplessness is becoming dominant. "We are a small people, capable only of small things" has come to be almost a national motto.<sup>1</sup>

To summarize: The Danes of to-day are a good-natured, easy-going people, somewhat lacking in self-confidence and enterprise, and possessing no strong national ambition and no national institution which can lay claim to their undivided homage; this leaves them without any strong bond of union when removed from the mother country. Though as a nation they have a fair proportion of hard-fisted, matter-of-fact individuals, they are nevertheless largely influenced by sentiment and ideals.

In dealing with the emigrant, however, a new factor enters in, for emigration is a sifting process, and the emigrant differs in many respects from the people of his class who remain at home, and he therefore cannot be judged by the general national characteristics. He is more enterprising, more of a matter-of-

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been thoroughly canvassed by the missionaries, public meetings are held at which some of the abler speakers are present. Then Sunday schools for children are organized, or religious clubs for the older people, through which the agitation is continued. The effect aimed at is identical with that of revivalists in this country, though the success attained in Denmark is more lasting.

<sup>1</sup>The disastrous war of 1864 with the Prussians and Austrians has done much to depress the national spirit.

fact man. At any rate his love of personal advantage is liable to be greater than his love of country, home and friends, for he is willing to part with them to better his fortune. He does not as a rule leave his native land because he suffers actual want there, but most usually because he feels unable to maintain what he considers a proper standard of life; and it is only in cases where emigration is prompted by religious or political persecution that he is liable to be a man of as much patriotic sentiment as those who stay at home.<sup>1</sup> The record of the Danes in America furnishes a most striking illustration of this theory; indeed it is impossible to otherwise explain their peculiar indifference toward all that might connect them with the land of their birth.

#### THE DANES IN AMERICA.

The emigration from Denmark has been more recent and the number of emigrants smaller than from the other Scandinavian countries.<sup>2</sup>

	Norwegians.	Swedes.	Danes.
1860 . . . . .	43,995	18,625	9,962
1870 . . . . .	114,243	97,332	30,098
1880 . . . . .	181,724	194,337	64,196
1890 . . . . .	322,665	478,041	132,543

The fact that emigration from Denmark began so late and never assumed any considerable proportions would naturally

<sup>1</sup>An extended inquiry among my own countrymen who have emigrated, and among those in the same circumstances in Denmark, bears out this theory. In answer to my question to the former, "Why did you emigrate?" the invariable answer was, "I did not want to be a common laborer in my own country," or "I did not care to live such a life of drudgery and poverty as my parents lived; I can't do worse in America, and I may do better;" while my question to the latter, "Why do you not emigrate?" was answered as follows: "I can't bear the thought of leaving home with the chance of never coming back again," "I can't get any pleasure out of life in any other place," or "I would like to go, but when I think of all the dangers and troubles of it I feel I might as well stay at home, and take what little comfort I can get out of life here."

<sup>2</sup>The cause of the smaller emigration from Denmark than from Norway and Sweden is undoubtedly due mainly to the better economic conditions

tend to make the social and religious organizations of the Danes smaller and weaker than those of the Norwegians and Swedes. But this fact does not account for the difference existing, especially between the Danes and Norwegians, in the matter of forming settlements, supporting churches and schools, and general social and political co-operation, — a difference so striking that it must of necessity unsettle the present belief in the similarity of character of these nationalities.

The Norwegians, according to their number, show a stronger tendency to concentrate in large settlements on account of preference for their own countrymen, than any other European nationality, while the Danes go almost to the other extreme in this matter. The table below is an attempt at showing in figures the correctness of this statement. In the second column the highest percentage in any one state is given, because state lines, though not always physical barriers, nevertheless act as a check to close co-operation, especially in a political way. Besides, in the minds of the people in Europe, the state stands for a compact piece of territory of a limited extent, and with this notion is naturally associated the idea of easy and close communication among those living within the state. For these reasons, the immigrants who concentrate largely in one state show thereby a desire for remaining in touch with their own nationality.

The numbers in the third column, indicating the percentage in settlements of more than five hundred, are obtained by adding the numbers of persons of a given nationality in counties where five hundred or more of this nationality are found. and

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existing in the former country. In fact, want is a thing almost wholly unknown in Denmark. The condition of the common people has been improving rapidly and almost constantly during the present century. At the beginning of the century the land was nearly all in the hands of the nobility, while at present only one-seventh of it is in their possession, the rest of it being in the hands of the peasants, who constitute the bulk of the population. (H. Weitemeyer, *Denmark*, p. 100.) Besides this, the improved methods of cultivation have increased the productive power of the country nearly ten-fold. No such decided change in property-holding or in producing power has taken place in Norway or Sweden, while the population has been increasing as rapidly in these countries as in Denmark.

finding what per cent. this sum is of the whole number of persons of that nationality in the United States. The number five hundred is taken, because in counties containing a lesser number of persons of a given nationality, as a rule, no settlement will be found sufficiently large to maintain in a vigorous condition the social and religious life of the mother country, hence a nation with a large percentage in this column shows proof of a desire to concentrate on a basis of nationality.

The percentages in column four for contiguous territory are based on the fact that where more than five hundred of a given nationality are found in adjoining counties they form in many respects one settlement, because they are able to co-operate in the maintaining of churches and schools, and other relations of a social nature which they can only have with their own countrymen. Therefore a high percentage in this column also shows a desire for concentration on the basis of nationality.

The percentages in column five for cities of more than twenty-five thousand inhabitants are given, because a nationality largely represented in these cities may have a high percentage in column three on account of a liking for city life, rather than from any special desire to form settlements for the sake of living with their own people. It is the rural settlement which shows the national preference most strongly; for the formation of large settlements of this kind in a country as extensive as the United States necessitates a strong motive for so doing, and a definite plan. Therefore a nationality with a low percentage in column five, and high percentages in columns two, three and four, shows the strongest tendency to form settlements for the sake of associating with fellow-countrymen. But the emigrants of a nationality which fails in forming rural settlements to any extent, and does not concentrate largely in cities, show the least desire for association with their own people because they do not find such association by accident, as is the case with those nationalities which prefer city life, nor by preconcerted plan, as do those who form large rural settlements. From the table, the Norwegians are thus seen to lead in the matter of forming settlements, while only the French can be said to be in any way less forward in this regard than are the Danes; and these two pec-

plies, therefore, show the lowest concentrating tendency of all the European emigrants to this country.

	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.
	Total in United States.	Highest percentage in one state.	Percentage in settlements containing more than 500.	Percentage in contiguous territory.	Percentage in cities of more than 25,000.
Norway . .	322,665	31	80	56.6	20.78
Sweden . .	478,041	20.9	79.6	22.2	31.24
Holland . .	81,828	36.07	72.6	31.3	33.54
Poland . .	147,440	19.7	72.2	10.3	57.11
Bohemia . .	118,106	22.5	85.4	21.4	48.32
Denmark . .	132,543	10.1	47	8.1	23.24
Belgium. .	22,639	20.1	34.7	16.5	22.30
France . .	113,174	18	14.3	14.3	45.69
Wales . .	100,079	:	52	25.4	25.80
Scotland . .	242,231	:	56.8	12	41.25

I have omitted the English, Irish, Austrians, Hungarians and Italians because these nationalities have settled in such large numbers in the eastern cities, especially in New York, a fact which would run up their percentage in columns three and four enormously, while it by no means is an indication of the desire or ability of these nationalities to form settlements.

The Germans and Swiss I have omitted because both of these nationalities are made up of elements differing more from each other in language, religion, and race characteristics than do the people of the Scandinavian countries. So if the former should be classed as one nationality then the Scandinavians should also be classed together as one nationality, as has so often been done in national and state census.

The contiguous territory from which the figures in column four are obtained is:—for the Norwegians, the western tier of counties in Wisconsin, with extensions eastward in the north and south; the eastern, southern and western tiers of counties in Minnesota; the northern tier of counties in Iowa; and the eastern in North and South Dakota. It may be said that roughly the eastern, southern and western boundary lines of Minnesota form the center of this settlement. The Swedish settlement extends through the northern peninsula of Michigan, along the northern

tiers of counties in Wisconsin, and directly across the state of Minnesota at about the latitude of St. Paul. This settlement is not nearly as compact as the Norwegian.

The Hollanders have established their largest settlement in the southwestern part of the southern peninsula of Michigan. The Polanders and Bohemians have their largest settlements in the city of Chicago. The Belgian settlement is located about Green Bay, Wisconsin. France and Scotland have their settlements in and about the city of New York. The Welsh settlement includes the following counties in Pennsylvania: Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northampton, and Schuylkill.

This tendency of the Norwegians to concentrate, and of the Danes to scatter, is not of recent origin; for ever since the Norwegians have commenced to emigrate in any considerable numbers they have been as closely or even more closely concentrated than they are at present; while the Danes have been more widely scattered than they are now, as will be seen from the following tables:

*Norwegians.<sup>1</sup>—Greatest number in four states.*

	1850.	1860.	1870.	1880.	1890.
Total in United States	12,778	43,995	114,243	181,729	322,665
Illinois	2,500	4,891	11,880	16,970	30,339
Wisconsin <sup>2</sup>	8,000	21,442	40,046	49,349	65,666
Minnesota	..	8,425	35,940	62,521	101,199
Iowa	..	5,688	17,554	21,586	27,078

*Danes.—Greatest number in four states.*

	1860.	1870.	1880.	1890.
Total in U. S.	9,962	..	30,098	..
New York	1,196	Illinois	3,711	Illinois
Wisconsin	1,150	Wisconsin	5,212	Wisconsin
Utah	1,824	Iowa	2,827	Iowa
California	1,328	Utah	4,957	Utah

<sup>1</sup> As the Norwegians were not given separately by counties in U. S. census before 1890, it is impossible to obtain any definite statistics on this point until 1890.

<sup>2</sup> O. M. Nelson, *History of Scandinavians in America*, p. 134.

From the above tables it will be seen that the Norwegians concentrated from the beginning in the four adjacent states, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa; while the Danes were scattered across the whole width of the continent. From the parochial reports of the Norwegian church in America it appears that their settlements were about as large and compact in the fifties and early sixties as they are now; while as late as 1870 there were only five cities and six counties in the United States in which five hundred or more Danes could be found. These were: New York; Chicago and Rock Island, Illinois; Racine and Waupaca, Wisconsin; and Winnebago county, Wisconsin; Douglas county, Nebraska; and four counties in Utah where they had been massed by the Mormon church.

From this it is plain that the present concentration of the Norwegians is not due to accident, nor to the fact that they have been longer in this country than the Danes; nor is it because the conditions in the four states, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, are more congenial to the Norwegians than to the Danes. The opposite might seem to be the case, for the climate, productions, and occupations in these states are more like those existing in Denmark than in Norway.

There can be only one possible explanation of this difference between the Danes and Norwegians,—that the Danes who emigrate have less love of their native land and its institutions, less national pride, than the Norwegians, and therefore less desire to concentrate.

That such is the case is shown not only in the settlements of the two nationalities, but also in the manner each has supported the church of the mother country.

The first Norwegian church society in America was organized about 1850, when there were only a little more than 12,000 Norwegians in this country; and before this time several local congregations had been organized with their own ministers and churches.

The first Danish church society was organized in 1872, when there were more than 30,000 Danes in the United States; and before this time there was not a single purely Danish congregation with a Danish minister. It is true that some of the Danes

had at this time associated themselves with Norwegian and Swedish churches; but though no statistics can be had on this point, it is quite safe to say that not more than five per cent. of the Danes in this country were in this way associated with the Lutheran church.

The following table of percentages of the Norwegians and Danes in America who belonged to the church of the mother country, 1860-90, shows more clearly still the difference existing between them on this point:

	Norwegians.	Danes.
1860 . . . . . . . . . . . .	30.2	...
1870 . . . . . . . . . . . .	34.1	...
1880 . . . . . . . . . . . .	53.2	6.3
1890 . . . . . . . . . . . .	58.9	10.1

In connection with this it must be borne in mind that there have always been some Danes within the Norwegian church; but if these should all return to the Danish church it would not decrease the Norwegian by more than two per cent., nor increase the Danish by more than five per cent.

That the Danish church society should be small would naturally be expected from the fact that the settlements were insignificant and much scattered; but this certainly can not be assigned as a reason for the indifference which the people actually within the church have shown towards it and the institutions it has fostered. On this point the difference between the Norwegians and Danes is as striking as that shown by the percentages of settlements and church members.

The Norwegian ministers, especially in the beginning, had almost autoocratic control over their congregations; while the Danish ministers, with very few exceptions, had to submit weekly to whatever terms their congregations saw fit to impose upon them. The only power they possessed was the power of advice, and they had to use that with considerable discretion in order to keep their positions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>But few of them have kept their positions for any length of time. The majority do not average more than five years in a place, and they usually leave because of some misunderstanding with their congregations.

When the Norwegian ministers have gotten into a theological dispute, of which they have had many, their parishioners have invariably taken up the quarrel; and that they were in earnest about it is shown from the fact that they were, as a rule, willing to split up their congregations and go to the expense of building a separate church and of employing a separate minister. But among the Danes there is only one case on record of this kind, and in that case one of the factions was under the leadership of a Norwegian minister.<sup>1</sup>

The Norwegians have as a rule had more than twice as many parochial school teachers as they have had ministers and in the majority of their congregations parochial school has been held during some part of the year. In this line the Danes have done practically nothing.

But it is in the matter of contributions for educational purposes that the difference between the Norwegians and Danes is apparent. During the five years, 1860-65, the Norwegians contributed for the erection of the Decorah college as much as three dollars per communicant. Several times since then they have equaled or exceeded this contribution; and at present there are in connection with the Norwegian church sixteen colleges and academies, one of which, that at Decorah, Iowa, ranks with any of the American colleges in the West for the thoroughness of its course and the scholarship of its graduates. In 1892, these schools were attended by 2,160 students, nearly all of Norwegian parentage; and in all the schools great stress was laid on the teaching of the English language and other English branches.

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<sup>1</sup>This congregation is located in Montcalm county, Michigan. It might be argued that the Danish congregations do not split up because they are too small to maintain two separate churches. This is undoubtedly true in some cases, but the Montcalm congregation separated during the '70's, when it was no larger in its entirety than some of the factions created by the split of 1893 between the Grundtvigians and Inner Mission people.

During the summer of 1894 while visiting the Danish settlements in Polk county, Wisconsin, and Montcalm county, Michigan, I took special pains to find out the sentiment of the laymen on this quarrel, and the majority expressed themselves in favor of peace. In fact, none of them were clear as to what the quarrel was about. Several times my inquiries were answered in this manner: "We are ashamed of our ministers for quarreling, as they ought to know better."

During no consecutive five years up to 1894 had the Danes succeeded in raising as much as fifty cents per communicant for educational purposes; and the educational results attained by them are even more insignificant than the contributions.<sup>1</sup>

There can be no doubt that this lukewarmness among the members of the Danish church in America is in a large measure due to the factional quarrels in the church in Denmark. The immigrants in this country who are of a religious turn of mind still find it difficult to agree on any settled church policy, because they belong to different factions; and besides this, they have all been thoroughly weaned from any reverence for pastoral authority by the agitation carried on by the Grundtvigians and Inner Mission people in Denmark. Each man considers himself an authority on doctrine and church policy, and gives but little heed to the opinions and wishes of the minister, unless these coincide with his own. But in order to get a fair appreciation of the causes and effects of this failure of the Danish church in America it is necessary to give a somewhat detailed history of this institution. Indeed, the history of the Danes in this country, as a distinct nationality, is most intimately associated with the history of the church; for, in spite of its weakness and its failure to gain the support of the Danes, its policy has had a very decided influence on the social, religious, and educational conditions of the Danish settlements.

#### THE DANISH CHURCH IN AMERICA.

The first step toward the formation of a Danish church in America was taken by the organization of a society in Denmark, 1869, for the purpose of doing missionary work among the Danes in America. This society was composed almost entirely of Grundtvigians. Its work consisted mainly in selecting and training ministers for Danish congregations in America, and in acting as an advisory council to such ministers and congregations.

In October, 1872, three representatives of this society, A. Dan, N. Thomsen, R. Andersen, together with several Danish

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<sup>1</sup>This subject will be treated more in detail under the head of the educational efforts of the Danish church in America.

laymen, met in Neenah, Wisconsin, and organized the Danish Mission Society, the name of which was later changed to the Danish Lutheran Church in America. This society adopted a confession of faith of a decided Grundtvigian trend, but declared its intention to work in the manner of the Inner Mission society in Denmark, and to remain in close connection with the mother church.

Arrangements were made for the publication of a paper, *Kirkelig Samler*, "for Christian and popular education and edification." Much stress was laid on the fact that the society did not intend in any way to oppose other Lutheran church organizations. In spite of this, trouble arose immediately between the Danish Mission society and the Norwegian church societies previously established. The trouble was due mainly to a competition between the two factions, for the Danish church members. It was but natural that the Danish society should desire to get all the Danes within its fold, and it was just as natural that the Norwegians should be anxious to keep all the members they already had. But the point at issue was the Grundtvigian doctrine, which the Norwegian societies had previously declared rank heresy. The struggle was a long and bitter one, with the usual and mutual accusations of heresy, lying and treachery. The outcome of it all was that the Danes succeeded in getting the larger number of the Danish congregations already established. But many of these had become much divided in sentiment during the struggle, and there were but few places where the Danish ministers received unqualified support. The Norwegian ministers had succeeded in arousing a suspicion among the Danish laity that the Grundtvigian doctrine was unsound and dangerous, a suspicion which was one of the causes that later brought about the split of the Danish church into the two factions, the Grundtvigian and the Inner Mission.

In spite of this quarrel the Danish church seemed to prosper in the beginning. Already in 1873 it counted 1,020 paying members, 1,600 communicants and five ministers. In 1877 it had 1,934 paying members, 3,533 communicants and 17 ministers. But the situation was not as favorable as these figures seem to indicate, for this rapid growth was largely due to the

acquisition of congregations previously in charge of Norwegian ministers. And in most congregations there was an active minority opposed to the new order of things; while even among the ministers themselves considerable difference of opinion existed on the points of doctrine, and church policy. The Grundtvigians, however, were decidedly in the majority, and wholly determined the church policy, which was directed chiefly towards the maintenance of Danish language and sentiment, and the peculiar religious ideas of Grundtvig. The first step in this direction was to make the church in America a part of the Danish national church. At the annual church meeting of 1873 the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "We, the Danish ministers and congregations, hereby declare ourselves to be a branch of the Danish National Church, a missionary department established by that church in America." That this union was also considered seriously in Denmark, is shown from the fact that two graduates from the theological department of the University of Copenhagen, I. A. Heiberg and H. Rosenstand, on receiving calls from congregations in this country, were ordained by one of the bishops of the Danish church, and appointed by the king as regular ministers in that church.<sup>1</sup> There were, however, but few men qualified for holding the ministerial office in the church in Denmark, who could be persuaded to go to America; the small salary, the uncertainty of tenure of office, and the minister's lack of social prestige, all acted as checks in this direction. In order to supply ministers for this new field, a department was established at the Askov High School, a school of the Grundtvigian type, located in the south part of Jutland, for the preparation of ministers to American congregations. It was thought a great advantage to have the ministers trained in Denmark, as they would then be in the closest possible touch with the mother church and all that was Danish, and thus be better prepared to preach the doctrines of that church, and re-enforce

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<sup>1</sup>This union was further recognized by the Danish government, by an annual appropriation of \$840, made for the first time in 1884, for the training of ministers for the American branch of the Danish church. This money was at first expended in Denmark, but since 1887 it has been sent to this country, and expended here in aid of poor theological students.

the waning Danish spirit in America. Nearly all of these men had the merest rudiments of an education when beginning their work at Askov, most of them being farmers, mechanics, and common laborers, of a pious bent of mind. The course usually extended over but two years, and was limited almost wholly to theological studies. As might be expected, the men thus trained, on arriving in America were almost wholly ignorant of the language and conditions here, in fact, ignorant of nearly everything excepting a few theological arguments and church ceremonies. Even to-day not half a dozen of the sixty or more ministers of this church can converse fluently in English, to say nothing about preaching a sermon in that language. As a rule, they know nothing and care nothing about the social and political conditions here. As far as matters of this world are concerned, they are in truth blind leaders of the blind, or rather of the half-seeing, for many of their parishioners are much better posted on what goes on around them than are the ministers. Their methods of carrying on the business of the church are proof positive of their entire lack of all training and sense for practical affairs of life. They labored from 1878 till 1894, on a church constitution, without producing anything but dissension among themselves. In the matter of incorporation they succeeded no better, for though they worked nearly fifteen years on this problem the society was never properly incorporated, and none of them seemed to know how to proceed in the matter, or why they failed. Yet they all seemed anxious to comply with the law. Their parochial reports are very defective, and during some years were entirely omitted. In these reports no attention is paid to the educational work, nor is any regular account given of receipts and expenditures of money.<sup>1</sup> In annual meetings they seldom had any order either in business or debate. They would often discuss a subject for hours, and drop it without voting upon it. Four or five speakers might follow each

<sup>1</sup>No complete and comprehensive report of the receipts and expenditures of the churches has ever been published. In this the Danish differ greatly from the Norwegian churches, which, with exception of the Hau-gians, have always published very elaborate statistics of all the activities of the church each year.

other, each one talking on a different subject, and paying no attention to the remarks of the previous speaker. It was seldom that any definite plan was adopted for doing the business of the society, and when a plan or regulation was finally adopted it was seldom followed out in action. There is even a case on record where it was voted, seventeen to six, to discontinue a certain discussion. The discussion was still carried on for an hour or more, without any break other than was necessary to take the vote to discontinue.<sup>1</sup> In spite of all this chaos a number of projects, besides the union with the mother church, have been set on foot for carrying out the Grundtvigian pet idea of creating a little Denmark in the United States. The most important of these are: (1) The establishment of Grundtvigian high schools and parochial schools. (2) The planting of colonies. (3) The organization of a society for the maintenance of Danish sentiment and language.

#### THE HIGH SCHOOL.

This subject comes to the front for the first time at the annual meeting at Chicago, 1876. Though no definite action was taken in the matter, the discussion brought out very decided differences of opinion in regard to what ought to be done. Both sides were agreed that something ought to be done by the church to educate the young, and that the main object should be to make good Lutherans; but the Grundtvigians maintained that this could be done, as far as the Danes were concerned, only through the Danish language and by appealing to the Danish sentiment and memories,—while the opposition insisted that the old ballads played no part in the scheme of salvation, and that as a matter of fact the children born in this country had no Danish memories and sentiments;<sup>2</sup> but this latter was the opinion of only two men, N. Thomsen and Lillesø, and had at the time no influence in deciding the course to be pursued. After considerable more discussion and delay it was finally decided, at the annual meeting of 1878, this time without opposition, to establish a Grundtvigian high school. It was supposed

<sup>1</sup> *Kirkelig Samler*, 1884, p. 497.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 1876, p. 296.

that the necessary money could be raised by gifts, principally from the Danes in America, and each minister present at the meeting undertook the task of soliciting money from his congregation for the purpose. The Danish settlement at Elk Horn, Shelby county, Iowa, was chosen as the place of location; and Olav Kirkeberg, a Norwegian, but one of the ministers of the Danish church and a staunch Grundtvigian, undertook the task of building and conducting the school. No better man could be found for the purpose, for Kirkeberg had the courage of his convictions and unlimited faith in the success of his undertaking. These, in fact, according to his own statements, were nearly the only resources at his command when he began putting up the building which he estimated would cost two thousand dollars. On June 8, 1878, he wrote: "I have bought stones, for the foundation of the school; that took all the cash I had. In a couple of weeks the carpenters are coming; then I shall need five hundred dollars for lumber, while I am not sure of more than two hundred. Though the outlook is not very encouraging, I feel hopeful in the matter; because I am convinced this work will be a benefit to man and an honor to God, and therefore it must prosper."<sup>1</sup> Though continually embarrassed financially he still had the building completed by November, 1878, the time originally set for opening the school. The work as previously announced consisted of studies in general history, with special reference to the three Scandinavian countries; a review in Scandinavian mythology; lectures on the most important epochs in the history of the Christian church; history of literature, with the readings from the works of the best Scandinavian authors; studies in the mother tongue (Danish), including composition; English, including reading, practice in letter-writing, and business forms; science, including physiology, physics, and chemistry; geography; singing; and United States history.<sup>2</sup> All the instruction, excepting lectures on United States history and geography and the study of the English language, was conducted in Danish. The whole programme was to be carried out in the course of five months, with students coming directly

<sup>1</sup> *Kirkelig Samler*, 1878, p. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1878, p. 320.

from the farm and the workshop, having had little previous intellectual training. This latter fact, however, would not necessarily interfere much with the progress of the work, for most of the instruction was given in the form of lectures, requiring but little response or individual effort on the part of the student. It was a sort of five months University Extension course minus the University professors.

The faculty consisted of three men, Olav Kirkeberg, Christian Östergaard, and Mr. Crouse. Kirkeberg and Östergaard had received the greater part of their education at Grundtvigian schools in Denmark, the latter coming directly from Denmark to his work at Elk Horn. Mr. Crouse was an American with some knowledge of law, and was engaged at a regular salary of thirty-five dollars a month. His work consisted in lecturing on United States history and constitution, and giving instruction in English composition, reading, and business forms.

That everything was done to foster the Danish ideas and sentiments, and little attention was paid to the language and history of this country, is plainly shown in Kirkeberg's report of the first year's work. He says: "We found that some of our students had come mainly for the purpose of acquiring a knowledge of the English branches, but most of them failed to get the full benefit of Mr. Crouse's instruction because of their lack of knowledge of the English language. Besides, it was as though the mother-tongue, and the subjects taught therein, won the hearts more and more, and the preference which some at first gave to the English branches gradually disappeared. That young men can thus be touched by things considered most essential by the high schools both in Denmark and Norway, indicates that the cause for which we are working in this country will prosper."<sup>1</sup> On this point, however, he was mistaken, for his enthusiasm and that of his fellow Grundtvigians was not shared by the rest of the Danes in America, and no effort on their part could arouse such enthusiasm. Neither money nor pupils were forthcoming for the support of the school. By January 1, 1879, only eleven hundred four dollars<sup>2</sup> had been col-

<sup>1</sup>*Kirkelig Samler*, 1879, p. 217.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, 1879, p. 60.

lected for the building and support of the high school. The school was at that time under a debt of seven hundred fifty dollars, and had reached the limit of its credit, and was still far from being well equipped. When the school opened November 1, 1878, only nine of the sixteen students expected were on hand, and the total attendance during the five months' course was only nineteen. The money received in board and tuition, fourteen dollars per month for each student, scarcely sufficed to pay running expenses, to say nothing about the salaries of Kirkeberg and Östergaard.

During the next year the contribution ceased altogether; the debt increased to a thousand dollars; while there was no increase in attendance. In 1880, Kirkeberg, after having expended a good deal of money on the school, reached the limit of his credit and that of the school, and was obliged to abandon the enterprise, broken in health, but still hoping and praying for its success, which he considered of the utmost importance to the welfare of the Danes in this country. The school now became the sole property of the Danish church society, and managed to struggle on with several changes of administration and ownership, as a Grundtvigian high school, till 1890. During all this time the attendance had not averaged forty students a year. It had never received any regular money support from the church, and on the whole its existence had been a most precarious one. Strangely enough, the failure of this school, situated as it is in the midst of the largest Danish settlement in the United States, did not deter the Grundtvigians from establishing similar schools in places much less favorable. In the course of the next ten years four more such schools were established, one in Ashland, Michigan, 1883; one in Polk county, Wisconsin; one in Nysted, Nebraska; and one in Lincoln county, Minnesota, 1888.

The school in Polk county failed immediately for lack of support; while the others have always been considerably embarrassed financially, and the attendance at any one of them has not averaged thirty pupils a year. The total contribution by Danish laymen in America towards the building and maintenance of these schools up to 1894, aside from actual tuition, paid during the whole time does not amount to \$10,000. Considering that

at the time of the establishment of the Elk Horn high school there were at least sixty thousand Danes in America, and that in 1890 there were a hundred thirty-two thousand, the support which they have given the high schools is exceedingly small. The influence which the high schools have exerted on the Danes in America is still smaller. It is safe to say that not one of a thousand of the persons in the United States of Danish parentage, has attended one of these schools; and that the average time of attendance has not been more than four months. This being the case, the influence exerted by these schools on those who have attended, as well as on those who have not attended, must be almost infinitesimal. Moreover, there is no prospect that this influence will increase in the future, because they are not the kind of schools favored by the Danes here, and all the efforts of the Grundtvigian ministers can not make them so. The case of the Elk Horn school seems to prove this most conclusively. Since 1890, when it was reorganized so as to give prominence to the English branches, the attendance has more than tripled. In 1893-94, it had an enrollment of one hundred seventy-eight,<sup>1</sup> while all the other schools run on the Grundtvigian plan had no increase whatever, their total enrollment for the year amounting to only seventy-six; this, in spite of the fact that the Grundtvigian ministers, who were still largely in the majority, strongly opposed the Elk Horn school and favored the others.

#### THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL.

To keep the children within the fold of the Danish Lutheran Church was the desire common to all the Danish ministers. But here, as in the case of the high schools, the Grundtvigian idea that this could be done only by maintaining the Danish spirit, language and tradition was still the dominant one. Indeed it was commonly asserted by them that it was next to impossible for a Dane to be a good Christian and renounce either his language or his allegiance to his mother country. They found it difficult, however, to convince their parishioners of the necessity and utility of their scheme of education, which consisted in an attempt to supplant the common school with a Danish parochial school,

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<sup>1</sup>Catalogue of Elk Horn College for 1893-94.

in which the Danish language, history and traditions should be taught in connection with Lutheran doctrines, as interpreted by Grundtvig, while the English branches were to be relegated to the position of incidental studies. The common arguments used in favor of this plan were, that since the public school did not give religious instruction, it omitted one of the most essential objects of education; besides, in the public school most of the teachers were either "infidels" or "sectarians" who were prone to poison the children's mental food with doubts and false doctrine. Furthermore, the discipline and the whole moral atmosphere of the public school destroyed the innocence and sweetness of childhood, and the reverence for parental authority. Several plans for obtaining men and means for these schools were brought forward. One of the earliest and most feasible of all was to make the high school something of a teachers' seminary, and then organize a society whose aim should be to agitate the question among the people and raise the necessary funds. This plan failed, partly because few students stayed at the high school long enough to qualify themselves for the work of teaching, but mostly because the people in general refused to give it any substantial support. The society which was to prepare the way lived only one year, 1879-80, having accomplished nothing beyond the collecting of about one hundred and fifty dollars. When disbanded, it was admitted by its founders to be a failure. Another plan proposed was to get control of the public school in districts where Danes were in the majority, engage a Danish teacher qualified to teach both public and parochial schools, and give him a good salary for teaching the public school, so he could afford to teach the parochial school at a small salary, during the vacation of the former, which was to be as long as the law would allow. This plan, like the first one, came to nothing. No Danes could be found qualified to do the work required; and the high schools, which might have done something along this line, neglected to adapt themselves to the work. Besides this, there were but few districts in which the Danes were in the majority, and in these districts they were usually unable to agree on any scheme of education. In fact, nothing whatever of a practical nature has been done

along the line of parochial schools; and the results attained by these schools are correspondingly insignificant. Though there are no definite statistics on this point, it is safe to say that not more than six parochial schools established by this church can lay any claim to permanency, and that less than one thousand Danish children in this country have attended these schools long enough to become biased along the line of Grundtvigian thought.

This failure of the high schools and parochial schools is probably in part due to a lack of system and of agreement among the ministers; but its main cause is found in the almost total indifference of the Danes, at large, toward these schools. Had there been on an average three thousand Danes in hearty sympathy with the cause, they would and could have given a more substantial support both in money and men than has been given. This indifference is not due to any lack of agitation on the subject. The Grundtvigian ministers have had a fair opportunity to reach a large number of their countrymen. They have been located for years in the most populous Danish settlements; they have had the majority in every church conference; and have held almost uninterrupted control of the organ of the church, *Kirkelig Sander*, besides receiving the unqualified support of the Danish society for American missions and of the secular Danish-American newspaper, *Dannerirke*. There have never been lacking enthusiasts among them who have used every means at their command to propagate their particular views; while the opposition, within the church at least, did not become active before 1887, and then only as a small minority.

#### THE COLONIZATION SCHEME.

This scheme was adopted for the purpose of gathering the Danes into a few large settlements, which was thought to be one of the most effective means of strengthening the church and maintaining the Danish language and sentiment. The first settlement was established in Lincoln county, Minnesota. Here the church secured an option on 35,000 acres of land from a land company. The company agreed to sell this land to Danes only during the first three years. The first year the land was

to be sold at an average price of seven dollars per acre, and no greater advance than fifty cents per acre should be made during each of the following years. Besides this the company promised to donate 320 acres for the support of churches and high schools when one hundred actual settlers had been secured. For these privileges the church promised to use its influence in securing settlers. This settlement, in spite of considerable bickering and quarreling between the land agent, the church and the settlers, was fairly successful. The one hundred settlers were secured within a year, and at present the settlement contains about a thousand Danes who are maintaining a high school, a parochial school and a church. It is a settlement apparently as Grundtvigian and Danish as any existing in the United States. An attempt was made in 1888 to establish a settlement in Logan county, in the extreme western part of Kansas. On the invitation of the Union Pacific Railroad company the land committee of the church went out and inspected the land during the month of May. They were completely captivated with the fertility of the soil and the salubrity of the climate. They secured an option on four townships of land, to be sold to Danes at from four to six dollars an acre. They then proceeded to extol the advantages of the place, laying special stress on the fiction that the rainfall, which at present was quite sufficient, would still farther increase as the land was brought under cultivation. This, however, proved a mistaken theory, and the colony dried up in its infancy, while the reputation of the ministers as practical farmers and colonizers was badly damaged. This was the last attempt on the part of the church as an organization to form settlements. The idea however has not been abandoned, but has been taken up by the Dansk Folkesamfund (the society of the Danish people). This society has located two more settlements, one in Clark county, Wisconsin, and another in Wharton county, Texas. As yet these settlements are both in their infancy; like the settlement in Kansas, they are the cause of much newspaper correspondence of a decidedly unfriendly character, in which disappointed land agents are taking a prominent part, making it appear that the land selected is worthless and that the land committee was

very incompetent if not positively dishonest; and these opinions are being duly noticed and emphasized by opponents of the Dansk Folkesamfund. It is doubtful indeed if these attempts at settlement have done as much to unite the Danes as the ill feeling created thereby has done to separate them.

#### THE DANSK FOLKESAMFUND.

This society was established in 1887, under the auspices of a number of ministers and laymen of Grundtvigian tendencies.

The aim of this society is set forth in its constitution in the following language: "We establish this society in the belief that there is a need for an organization which will unite all the Danes in America who desire to maintain the Danish character and wish to aid in the labor of increasing our spiritual inheritance and making it fruitful, not alone for our own benefit or for that of our fatherland, but also for the benefit of the land to which we are now united by the strongest of ties. . . . When we Danes in America wish to perpetuate in America what is Danish, it is partly because of the inborn love we have for all the things that belong to our fatherland; but it is also because we are convinced that by so doing we are advancing the best interest of the land to which we now belong. When it is admitted that the meeting of people from all nations, on American soil, there to communicate with one another in the English language, is an historic event of first importance, it is mainly because the various nationalities thereby secure an opportunity to communicate to one another the results of their best thoughts and labors. In order that such an interchange may take place it is necessary that each nationality maintain its own language and remain in intimate association with the mother country, for only in this way is it capable of transmitting its possessions to others. We believe the Danish nation has a spiritual inheritance not wholly without value to humanity in general, and we wish to contribute our share toward human advancement."

To advance the interests of humanity in general, then, is the chief end of this society, and to keep in touch with the language and life of Denmark the chief condition necessary for reaching this aim.

But in trying to fulfill the condition the aim seems to be lost sight of; nothing whatever is done to master the English language or become acquainted with American institutions, while every effort is made to maintain all that is Danish and foster exclusion from life in this country. Two branches of this society have been established, one in this country and one in Denmark. The conditions for membership are that a person should be of Danish parentage and not opposed to the Lutheran church. The work of the society so far has consisted (1) in establishing local societies, the members of which hold regular meetings for the discussion of subjects relating to Denmark and whatever is Danish; (2) in founding a library of Danish books to be loaned on the payment of a small fee to any one capable of reading the Danish language; (3) in publishing a paper, *Kors og Stjerne* (Cross and Stars), devoted to an interchange of thought between the members in Denmark and America; (4) in establishing settlements for Danes in America; (5) in directing Danish immigrants to these or other Danish settlements; (6) in sending Danish lecturers of some prominence to Danish settlements; (7) in organizing excursions to Denmark of Danes in this country, especially of American birth, for the purpose of initiating them in the life there and strengthening their love for whatever is Danish. There has also been a general attempt on the part of this society to support the high schools, parochial schools and churches; but the efforts along these lines have not produced any noticeable results, except in the case of the churches; and here it was far from accomplishing what was intended, for this society and its methods of working immediately aroused a storm of opposition from the ministers of Inner Mission proclivities. They claimed it was merely a scheme on the part of the Grundtvigians to create a party in every congregation in favor of their ideas, and thus to drive out all the ministers who did not agree with them. It was almost the only subject discussed at the annual meeting of 1887, and the discussion was so bitter that the ministers themselves seem to have been ashamed of it; for instead of having the proceedings published in *Kirkelig Samler*, a special pamphlet was issued for the purpose, something which has not been done before or since. No conclusion in the matter

was reached, however, in this meeting, and the only result of all the discussion was to strengthen the suspicion and ill-feeling already existing; and from that time on there was not a semblance of harmony in the Danish church in America.

The members of the Inner Mission society now began an active crusade against all the plans of the Grundtvigians. Doctrinal differences were emphasized more and more, and the general indifference to the Grundtvigian scheme of education was changed to active opposition.

Rev. P. Vig is the principal exponent of the policy of the Inner Mission faction, while Rev. F. L. Grundtvig,<sup>1</sup> son of the great Danish reformer, is the exponent and leader of the Grundtvigians. The controversy was opened by P. Vig in an article written by him for *Kirkelig Samler* of June 17, 1888, in which he sets forth his ideas on the subject of education as follows: "There are many whose greatest desire it is that the language which is their mother-tongue shall also be the mother-tongue of their children, but feel, nevertheless, compelled to admit that this desire cannot be realized. And we should indeed serve ourselves and our children poorly by doing all in our power to

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<sup>1</sup>F. L. Grundtvig, the acknowledged leader of the Grundtvigians in America, is the youngest son of the great Danish reformer, N. F. S. Grundtvig. He came to America in 1881, after having taken his degree at the University of Copenhagen. In 1883 he accepted the pastorate of a small Danish congregation in Clinton, Iowa, which position he has held ever since. He first made himself prominent by a violent attack on secret societies in general and on Dansk Brodersamfund in particular; this was a secret society of the most innocent kind, established for social purposes and mutual aid, and without any political or religious aims whatever. The attack was based wholly on the fact that it was a secret society, and that in its ritual the name of God was used and prayers were offered in a manner which Grundtvig considered blasphemous. The outcome of this attack was a quarrel between the church and Brodersamfundet (the Brotherhood), in which as usual the church was the loser. From the beginning of his ministerial career Grundtvig has been an ardent supporter of the high schools and of all means for maintaining what was Danish. He was a prominent member of the first land committee, and one of the leaders in the organization of Dansk Folkesamfund, and soon became its actual leader and mouthpiece. He is a voluminous writer of both poetry and prose, but as yet he has produced nothing of any special merit. Most of his

prevent them from becoming Amerieanized; for the maintaining of the Danish tongue is as far from being the greatest blessing as the getting of the English is the greatest curse. Even if the Danish language is lost to our posterity, they might still retain all that is good and true in the Danish character; for just as a man can take his material inheritance into a foreign country, so he can take his spiritual inheritance into a foreign tongue. We older people must remember that we can hardly imagine ourselves in our children's places. They have a fatherland which is not ours. In a measure it is impossible for them to be Danes; for they lack the Danish environments, and in a measure the Danish tongue must always be a foreign tongue to them. To keep the children born in this country from coming in contact with its language and life is a violation of nature which will at last revenge itself." 11

This sentiment was promptly attacked by F. L. Grundtvig and other Grundtvigians. They did not, however, stop at this, but made the subject a personal one, thereby arousing a personal animosity which did much to intensify the subsequent quarrel.

The Grundtvigians continued to push their high schools,

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poems are decidedly prosy, a large share of them being argumentative, written to prove his own theories, or to disprove those of his opponent. He is very prone to the use of sarcasm and bitter personal attacks; though he sometimes apologizes for his harsh expressions, he usually repeats the offense when the next opportunity offers itself, and through this unfortunate trait of character he has made more enemies than through the advocacy of his peculiar religious and social theories.

But whatever may be the faults of his character and theories, it cannot be denied that he is honest, fearless, and unselfish in his labors for the cause he considers right. He has never in all his labors in this country considered his own advantage in the matter of money or position. He might have stayed in Denmark and been sure of an easy, paying position; and he might have gone back in 1894, as pastor of the Marble Church in Copenhagen, one of the most honorable clerical positions in Denmark, and one in which he could have been at perfect liberty to preach just what he believed. But he has chosen to stay with his American congregation on a salary scarcely sufficient to support him, with a record of defeat behind him and almost certain failure before him; and that, too, though he considers himself as an exile here, and feels at home nowhere but in Denmark.

while in 1890 the Inner Mission Society found an expression of their ideas in the reorganization of the Elk Horn high school on the American plan; and that this change was approved by the laity is seen from the substantial increase in the attendance at this school already referred to.<sup>1</sup> This did not tend to allay the ill feeling already existing. The Grundtvigians considered the change at Elk Horn as an act of treachery, for now the school for which they had worked so hard and from which they had hoped so much had been taken out of their hands and made a fortress of the enemy, and that too by a man whom they at one time had counted as one of their own. Meanwhile another cause of dissension had arisen. The instructors of the theological school in Polk county, Wisconsin, Th. Helvig and P. Vig, had become entangled in a violent doctrinal quarrel which spread to the rest of the ministers, and it seemed as though the society was hopelessly divided; but at an extra meeting held at Waupaca, Wisconsin, 1891, a truce was patched up. It was agreed that Grundtvig should use his influence in disbanding Dansk Folkesamfund, that the Elk Horn school should be used as a theological seminary, and that Vig and Helvig should return to their posts as theological instructors. But Dansk Folkesamfund refused to disband; the people at Elk Horn did not wish to see their school changed; and Vig resigned his position on the plea that he could not conscientiously work together with Helvig, and again the quarrel was on, more bitter than ever. Finally in 1893 the Inner Mission ministers seceded and formed a separate society. But this separation was one of ministers mostly; the congregations are as yet woefully mixed, and there seems but little hope of getting them divided on a basis of Grundtvigians and Inner Mission, for though there are enough of each faction in every congregation to make it uncomfortable for the other, there are not enough or they are not sufficiently enthusiastic to form separate congregations with permanent ministers and churches, at least no such congregations have yet been found.

One of the immediate effects of this controversy has been to stimulate somewhat the languid interest of the laymen in church

<sup>1</sup> *Ante*, p. 24.

affairs; but in the main it is a ministers' quarrel and the conservative common-sense members of their congregations look upon it with decided disapproval, while the large majority are not interested enough to find out what the quarrel is about or to range themselves on either side. There is a possibility that the split will in the end make the Danish church somewhat more efficient than it has been so far; for hereafter the Inner Mission faction will have an opportunity to pursue its somewhat aggressive systematic policy without interference by the Grundtvigians, which will be a great advantage in carrying out its plans. Besides, this faction will undoubtedly in the course of a few years have formed a firm alliance with the Danish Church Association, a society organized in 1884 by six Danish ministers and their congregations, which up to that time had belonged to the Norwegian-Danish Conference. In 1890 this society had a membership of 3,493, and church property amounting to \$44,775. They have established a school at Blair, Nebraska, and this as well as all the church work of the association is conducted on the same plan and in the same spirit that prevail in the Norwegian church societies. But the fact that only 3,493 out of the 132,543 Danes in America in 1890 belonged to this society, shows that it cannot be very popular with the majority. The two societies when united will not at the utmost contain more than 10,000 members. These, however, will be likely to work together more harmoniously and more earnestly than the Grundtvigians and Inner Mission people, and may succeed in maintaining some quite efficient schools and a few united congregations.

As far as the Grundtvigians are concerned, their past seems to prove conclusively that there is no future for them in this country. They will get but little support from the old settlements; they are unable to establish new ones from the Danes already in this country. Neither can they hope much from an immigration from Denmark, for in the first place such an immigration is not liable to be very extensive in the near future, because the social and economic conditions in Denmark are and promise to be fairly good; besides this, the Grundtvigians will be, as they have been, the last ones to emigrate, for they are

more attached to their native land than are their opponents. It is this very fact which accounts largely for the striking indifference with which Grundtvigianism is regarded by the Danes in America, while in Denmark it receives their strongest support. Yet in spite of the present weakness and past failures of the Grundtvigians in this country, they have, nevertheless, exerted a decided influence on the Danes here, especially on those who have congregated in settlements. But this influence has been mostly of a negative character. For, though they could not be persuaded to support the Grundtvigian schools, they were quite easily persuaded from making any special effort to get an English education. The fact that the minister was suspicious of the common school was quite a strong argument in the eye of the thrifty parent for keeping his boy at home to help on the farm instead of sending him to school, and on the whole from taking any special interest in the public school beyond that of keeping the expense of its maintenance as low as possible. The result to-day of this policy shows itself in a condition bordering very closely on illiteracy among a great number of young people who have grown up in the Danish settlements. They have failed to get a fair command of either the Danish or English language, because, as a rule, there was no parochial school to give the necessary instruction in Danish, and they did not avail themselves sufficiently of the advantages offered by the American schools to gain a mastery of the English. But the policy of slighting the English branches in the Grundtvigian high schools has had a more tangible, and if possible, a more detrimetal influence on the life of the Danes in America. It has alienated the young Danish immigrants from the church and left them to shift for themselves in the acquiring of an English education, which usually meant a failure on their part to get such an education. They did not care and could not be made to care for the education offered them by the Grundtvigian high schools. Thus they were left out of touch with the church along a line on which it had the greatest opportunity for helping them and extending its influence over them. They could find no American school adapted to their needs, and though most of them were ambitious to master the English language

they were usually discouraged in their first attempts and gave it up altogether. It is a rare thing to find in a Danish settlement a man who can carry on the ordinary business transactions in the English language. In fact such a man is sometimes king among his countrymen. They are absolutely dependent upon him in their intercourse with the world where the reading and writing of the English language is required. He may run their political caucuses, their township and school affairs to suit himself, and this in spite of the fact that he is not acceptable to a majority of the voters, for they have no other choice. If it is a rare thing to find a man in a Danish settlement who can do business in the English language, it is a still rarer thing to find one qualified to teach a district school. Even in districts exclusively Danish, a Dane is seldom employed as teacher.<sup>1</sup> A superstition exists in some settlements that a Dane is incapable of acquiring the accomplishments necessary to teach a country school; and that, if through unusual mental endowment and industry any one should actually succeed in this, then the "Yankee county superintendent" would nevertheless deny him a certificate on account of his nationality.

It is, however, not fair to lay the whole blame for this state of things on the Grundtvigian ministers; because there exists among the Danes, especially in this country, a very marked tendency to self-depreciation, a lack of confidence in themselves individually and in their countrymen generally, for which the Grundtvigian ministers are not responsible. But these ministers were the natural leaders of their people, the only ones who had an opportunity. There was need of such leadership, too, for the great mass of Danes who have emigrated belong to the laboring classes, who have had little or no training in the management of educational affairs. They could not, though they had a fair idea of what they wanted, take the initiative in the matter themselves. And if the Grundtvigian ministers, instead of trying to force their own ideas through, had met the desire of their people for an English education, they could have built up a system of schools which would have given them a hold on the most enterprising and

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<sup>1</sup> Since the Elk Horn school began to prepare its students for the work of teaching, this state of affairs is somewhat modified.

ambitious young Danes, thus securing them as a support for their church, at the same time giving them a training which would have made them more useful to themselves and the society in which they have chosen to live. While the net result of the educational efforts of the Grundtvigians so far consists in the securing of a few enthusiasts and sentimentalists who by their very system of education have been unfitted for taking any active part in affairs in this country, for they have taken a narrow, one-sided view of Grundtvig's teaching, accepting the emotional side and completely rejecting the practical. Yet, in justice to them, it must be admitted that their main fault consists in adopting a mistaken ideal and espousing a hopeless cause. Their intentions were of a wholly philanthropic and disinterested nature. Many of them have made great sacrifices both in money and social position in order to carry out their ideas; and it is after all to be regretted that they did not adopt some more practical means for carrying out their ideas among the American people at large, for they are full of a spirit none too common among us here. They could have done a great work, if, together with some good practical English instruction, they could have transmitted to the Danes, at large, in this country, a touch of their own idealism. There is need of something to tone down the all-absorbing materialism to which the immigrant is by nature predisposed, and which is so strongly re-enforced by the environment in this country. Though the Grundtvigians are in a measure to blame for the social and religious failures of the Danes in this country, they are not the sole nor the main cause of this failure,—no matter what church or educational policy had been pursued, it would not have had the power to make even a fairly united nationality of the Danes. They have shown conclusively that they have had but little desire to establish any society or church modeled on the society and church existing in Denmark. Their object in coming to this country was to better their material condition. They left Denmark at a time when the spirit of national pride was at a low ebb, when all the political hopes and aspirations of the nation had been disappointed, and when the church was hopelessly divided against itself. There was nothing in their native land they could look to with special

pride, no one thing on which they could unite as a basis of their common nationality. The question naturally arises, would it have been better for the Danes individually if like the Norwegians they had formed compact settlements and a strong church; would such a condition have been more favorable for the development of good men and good citizens than the present scattered and disorganized condition?

It is frequently alleged that settlements, churches and parochial schools, as established by the foreigners in this country, form the chief evils of immigration, by perpetuating conditions which produce a heterogeneous population with aims and interests antagonistic to republican institutions and a stable state of society. This belief, however, is undoubtedly an erroneous one, arising out of a misconception of the real needs of our foreign population. These settlements, churches and schools, instead of being a menace to our state, form one of the main safeguards of this country against the dangers accompanying the large influx of people of various nationalities. A large number of the immigrants are young people, and, as far as character is concerned, are still in the formative stage. Nearly all of them come from quiet, staid communities where they have a recognized standing and the pleasure of social intercourse with their equals, and where they are now and then touched by the elevating influences exercised by the church, the school or some other social institution whose work and sentiment they can understand and appreciate. Their social circle holds them responsible for their conduct, stimulating their desire for respectability, thus constituting one of the most potent checks to the vicious impulses that at times are liable to dominate the conduct of people left entirely to themselves. It is this function of stimulating the good and checking the evil, so necessary for the development and maintenance of decent character and good citizenship, which the settlement and church of the foreigner performs, a function which no other institution in this country could perform, yet one of invaluable service to the country as well as to the immigrant. There is no situation much more hopeless and demoralizing than that of the ordinary immigrant, unacquainted with the English language and totally

isolated from some staid, sober society of his countrymen, in which the conditions of his native land are in a measure maintained, and where his social standing is dependent on good conduct. In the first place, if he is isolated from such a community he is obliged to play the part of a mute for almost a year after his arrival, save only for such conversation as he can carry on in his native language with the horses and cows about him, and except for such oaths and other strong expressions in the English language as readily fix themselves in the memory of the foreigner, and for the repetition of which there seem to be so many urgent occasions for both native and foreigner. Then again, there is the depressing effect of his social position among the natives. He is made to feel most keenly that he is a being of a lower order, a sort of beast of burden, tolerated only on account of his burden-bearing capacities. He is excluded from all social gatherings of a respectable character, either on account of language or nationality. He is sometimes made the object of pity, but more often of ridicule. As a rule there is only one place, the saloon, where he is received on terms of social equality, and where something is done to make him feel at home and at his ease. It is a rare thing indeed that the young foreigner who cuts loose from the settlement and church of his countrymen, comes under the better influences of American society. He is more often affected by the influences already mentioned plus that exercised by a number of boon companions, who like himself are isolated from all that is elevating, either foreign or American. The character of citizen formed under such conditions is without question far more dangerous to this country than that evolved in the most isolated "priest-ridden" foreign settlement, where at least the sentiment "I am my brother's keeper" is still alive and active. In fact, it is from contemplating the effect of the process of Americanization described above that the foreign clergyman finds one of his chief reasons for excluding his flock from American influence. Being unacquainted with American conditions and out of sympathy with them, to begin with, and both from preference and education of an uninvestigative turn of mind, he reasons from the facts immediately about him; and, seeing only the evil

effects of American influence, he fails to realize the fact that it might be used for good. That the minister might advance the cause of his church, and increase the happiness and usefulness of his countrymen, by helping them to choose the good and avoid the evil in American society, is very far from being comprehended by those who dominate the policy of the church. The average clergyman is, however, no more "ignorant and bigoted" in his views than the man who fails to see any good in the efforts of the foreigners to maintain the language, manners and customs of their native land; for such critic does not realize that the tenacious clinging of the foreigners to things which in their childhood they were taught to hold sacred reveals a most valuable characteristic, that it shows a stability of character in the foreigners which makes them much more desirable citizens than they would be if they could throw off all love for and allegiance to their native land and language as easily and with as little regret as they would discard a worn-out coat.

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## APPENDIX.

(The following statistics were obtained from the U. S. census of 1890.)

## 1.

Contiguous counties in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and the two Dakotas east of the Dakota river, each county having a population of more than 500 Norwegians.

## WISCONSIN.

Ashland.....	947	Jackson.....	2,507
Bayfield.....	1,085	Monroe.....	837
Douglas.....	1,058	La Crosse.....	4,371
Chippewa.....	1,379	Juneau.....	518
Burnett.....	497	Vernon.....	3,387
Polk.....	1,311	Crawford.....	801
Barron.....	2,373	Grant.....	400
St. Croix.....	2,638	Iowa.....	904
Dunn.....	3,167	LaFayette.....	927
Eau Claire.....	3,897	Green.....	623
Clark.....	605	Dane.....	6,728
Pierce.....	1,835	Rock.....	1,632
Pepin and Buffalo.....	1,232	Walworth.....	515
Trempealeau.....	4,118	Racine.....	949

## MINNESOTA.

Duluth (city).....	2,389	Redwood.....	434
Washington.....	591	Brown.....	875
Anoka.....	1,527	Yellow Medicine.....	2,384
Ramsey.....	3,636	Renville.....	1,980
Hennepin.....	13,014	Lac-qui-parle .....	2,641
Rice.....	1,288	Chippewa.....	1,995
Goodhue.....	3,485	Kandiyohi.....	2,562
Olmsted.....	820	Meeker.....	671
Dodge.....	1,044	Big Stone.....	466
Waseca.....	646	Swift.....	1,822
Steele.....	527	Stevens.....	692
Houston.....	1,934	Pope.....	2,623

## MINNESOTA — continued.

Fillmore.....	4,171	Stearns.....	831
Freeborn.....	2,600	Grant.....	1,770
Mower.....	1,787	Douglas.....	1,569
Faribault.....	1,264	Todd.....	774
Blue Earth.....	998	Wilkin.....	641
Jackson.....	1,232	Otter Tail.....	5,955
Rock.....	1,049	Clay.....	2,700
Watowwan.....	1,042	Becker.....	1,527
Cottonwood.....	785	Norman.....	3,821
Murray.....	676	Polk.....	6,861
Pipestone.....	253	Marshall.....	1,717
Lincoln.....	558	Kittson.....	672
Lyon.....	988		

## IOWA.

Clayton.....	633	Worth .....	1,910
Allamakee.....	1,283	Winnebago.....	1,871
Winneshiek .....	3,347	Sioux City.....	1,758
Mitchell.....	548		

## SOUTH DAKOTA.

Union.....	612	Minnehaha .....	2,953
Clay .....	572	Moody.....	588
Yankton.....	1,054	Brookings.....	1,546
Lincoln.....	1,324		

## NORTH DAKOTA.

Sargent.....	732	Steele.....	1,118
Richland .....	1,837	Griggs .....	822
Ransom .....	947	Grand Forks.....	3,518
Cass .....	2,428	Nelson.....	1,098
Barnes .....	1,150	Ramsey.....	676
Traill.....	3,572	Walsh .....	2,523

## II.

Isolated counties in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa, each having a population of more than 500 Norwegians.

## ILLINOIS.

Cook.....	22,365	Grundy .....	880
De Kalb.....	580	La Salle.....	1,718
Kendall.....	1,099		

## WISCONSIN.

Columbia .....	862	Portage.....	1,048
Door .....	962	Shawano .....	709
Manitowoc.....	900	Waupaca .....	1,270
Marinette.....	867	Winnebago .....	562
Milwaukee.....	1,904		

## IOWA.

Buena Vista.....	580	Monona.....	548
Emmet .....	533	Woodbury .....	1,947
Hamilton.....	1,613	Polk .....	522
Webster.....	894	Story.....	1,824
Wright .....	529	Marshall.....	572
Humboldt .....	1,031		

## MINNESOTA — None.

## III.

Contiguous counties in Northern Peninsula of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, having a Swedish population of more than 500:

## MICHIGAN — NORTHERN PENINSULA.

Delta.....	1,475	Menominee .....	4,021
Marquette.....	4,303	Iron.....	719
Schoolcraft.....	559	Gogebic.....	1,769

## WISCONSIN.

Florence.....	500	Burnett.....	1,541
Marinette.....	1,407	Polk.....	1,600
Ashland.....	1,357	Barron.....	566
Price.....	982	St. Croix.....	694
Bayfield.....	774	Pierce.....	1,281
Douglas.....	1,572	Pepin.....	739

## MINNESOTA.

Duluth (city).....	4,102	Blue Earth.....	822
Carlton.....	901	Nicollet .....	1,619
<i>Aitkin</i> .....	407	Renville .....	968
Crow Wing.....	570	<i>McLeod</i> .....	160
Morrison.....	623	Kandiyohi .....	2,752
<i>Benton</i> .....	300	Chippewa .....	523
Pine.....	966	Swift .....	784
Kanabec.....	827	Sherburne.....	512
Isanti.....	2,758	Stearns.....	511
Chisago.....	3,955	Pope .....	677
Anoka.....	1,032	Grant .....	878
Washington.....	3,399	Douglas .....	2,521
Ramsey.....	12,212	Otter Tail .....	2,470
Hennepin.....	20,167	Becker .....	731
Wright.....	2,550	Clay .....	1,050
Meeker.....	3,249	<i>Norman</i> .....	248
Carver.....	1,236	Polk .....	2,241
Dakota.....	799	Marshall .....	2,025
Goodhue.....	3,695	Kittson.....	1,668
Sibley.....	1,134		

## IV.

Isolated counties in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa having a Swedish population of more than 500:

## ILLINOIS.

Cook.....	45,607	Henry.....	4,324
Winnebago.....	6,204	Knox.....	4,697
De Kalb.....	1,695	Peoria.....	623
Kane.....	3,252	Warren.....	832
Will.....	2,140	Mercer.....	1,322
Ford.....	1,189	Rock Island (city).....	4,661
Bureau.....	1,807	McLean.....	624
La Salle.....	758		

## WISCONSIN.

Door.....	589	Eau Claire .....	546
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## IOWA.

Des Moines.....	1,973	Cherokee.....	529
Webster.....	2,014	Woodbury.....	2,402
Boone.....	2,385	Crawford.....	517
Hamilton.....	549	Montgomery.....	1,468
Polk.....	2,107	Page.....	1,220
Sac.....	625	Pottawattomie.....	561
Buena Vista.....	899	Wapello.....	961
Pocahontas.....	524		

## MINNESOTA.

Martin.....	587
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## V.

Contiguous counties in Iowa and Nebraska, having a Danish population of more than 500:

## IOWA.

Audubon .....	1,067	Shelby .....	1,347
Pottawattomie .....	1,922		

## NEBRASKA.

Washington .....	724	Douglas .....	4,714
Dodge .....	623		

## VI.

Isolated counties in Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska having a Danish population of more than 500:

## ILLINOIS.

Cook .....	7,488
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## WISCONSIN.

Brown .....	819	Polk .....	844
Winnebago .....	1,210	Racine .....	2,893
Waupaca .....	962	Kenosha .....	554

## IOWA.

Black Hawk .....	645	Clinton .....	951
Buena Vista .....	512	Woodbury .....	711

## NEBRASKA.

Howard .....	1,153	Lancaster .....	505
Kearney .....	941		

## MINNESOTA.

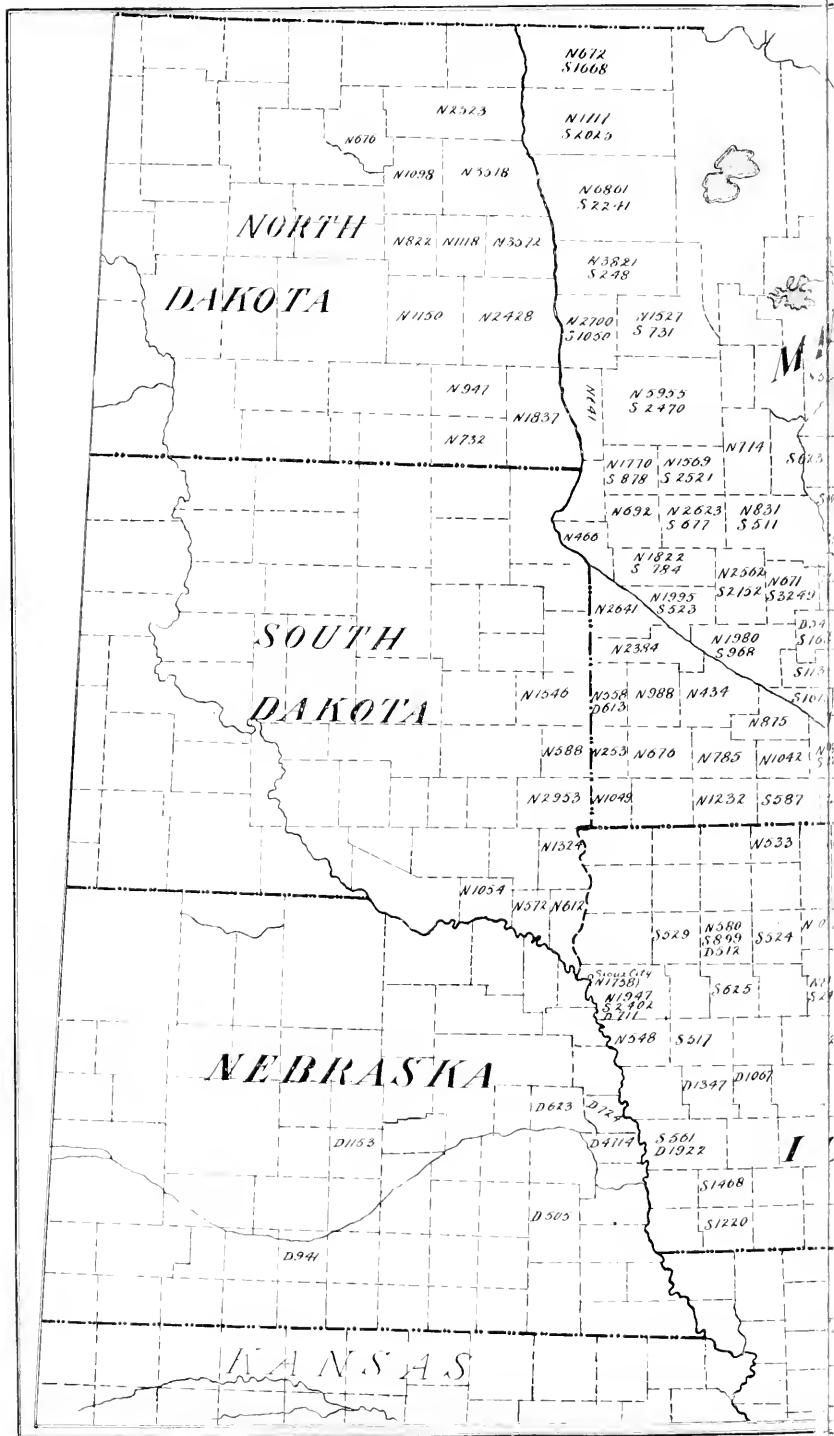
Freeborn .....	1,633	Lincoln .....	613
Hennepin .....	1,731	McLeod .....	546
Ramsey .....	1,482	Steele .....	588

## EXPLANATION OF PLATE I.

Map showing the distribution of the Scandinavian population in contiguous areas of Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and the two Dakotas east of the Dakota river.

*N*, Norwegians; *S*, Swedes; *D*, Danes. The figures following indicate the population of each nationality.





## Plate I.















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